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ABSTRACT

A guide for teachers developing a high school Latin curriculum provides a rationale, structure, and method for course planning at four difficulty levels. The approach is based on seven subject matter goals and specific instructional objectives for each, which are appended. The goals are: to help students (1) understand simple Latin syntax; (2) develop vocabulary skills; (3) develop the ability to read and understand a simple passage in Latin; (4) demonstrate an awareness of how Latin has influenced English; (5) understand the institutions, culture, and religion of Roman society; (6) understand the Roman cultural influence on present-day America; and (7) develop the ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin. The classroom implications of these goals are expanded on for each level of a four-year course sequence. (MSE)

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10 Developing a Latin Curriculum for High School

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Introduction

The purpose of the following paper is to provide a rationale, structure, and method for the development of a Latin curriculum at the high school level, especially for novice Latin teachers who find themselves overwhelmed at the prospect of being appointed "the Latin department." At the outset, a mild disclaimer is necessary. There are many good ways to approach the establishment or modification of a Latin program. The ideas presented below are not offered as the only approach to teaching Latin or necessarily the best; they have, however, been developed over the past twelve years and seem to be logical and useful ways to present material to students.

In planning this Latin curriculum, seven subject-matter goals that help focus the selection of materials and preparation of classroom activities have been identified: (1) understand simple Latin syntax, (2) develop vocabulary skills, (3) develop ability to read and understand a simple passage in Latin, (4) demonstrate an awareness of how Latin has influenced English, (5) understand the institutions, culture, and religion of Roman society, (6) understand the Roman cultural influences on present-day America, and (7) develop ability to pronounce sounds of classical Latin.

In addition to the brief description of these goals that follows they are also given in the appendix with specific instructional objectives. The order of the goals listed above is for Latin I only; emphases change as the

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student moves from one course to another. It is also important that a balance be maintained between the grammar of the first, second, and third goals, the historical and cultural perspectives of goals four, five, and six, and the daily repetition of Latin as represented in the seventh. Too much grammar and reciting aloud do not allow students a chance to experience the intricacies of Roman roads or the social ritual of the bath. On the other hand, too much indulgence in culture and daily life causes the class to become, not a foreign language class, but a history or humanities class, which should not be the intention of a Latin curriculum.

Teaching Latin I

In addition to striking a balance among the different subject-matter goals, Latin teachers need to be optimistic about their Latin I classes and think of their first-year students as individuals who are going to be in the Latin program for four years. This positive attitude assumes that all students will succeed, allowing gradual selection of those students who can or should continue as appropriate or necessary.

The majority of the Latin I year is spent on grammar (case endings, verb endings, vocabulary, sentence translation, paragraph translation) with occasional activities having to do with art, architecture, roads, food, mythology, sports, etc. There may even be time for an action-packed movie such as *Ben-Hur* or *Spartacus*. It is also important to emphasize Roman cultural influences on modern daily life. The Latin teacher should explain how Latin lives in the world of business, politics, television, books, and magazines. Referring to Pompeian Olive Oil or Appian Way Pizza are only the beginning to exposing students to the many and varied uses of Latin in our culture. "Make it relevant" is not a popular saying today; but that is exactly what the Latin teacher needs to do. Make it relevant because it is relevant.

Thus, the goal of the Latin I teacher is to cover as much grammatical ground as possible, and at the same time convince the student that all of the hard work will result in a recognizable and attainable goal. If the teacher is excited about all the new and different information being set forth, the student cannot help but be excited also. Latin I is probably the most important year because it sets the tone for the entire program. The

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real and ultimate goal of every secondary Latin teacher is to build a strong Latin program from grades nine through twelve.

Teaching Latin II

In Latin II eight subject matter goals are employed. The only difference between the goals of first- and second-year Latin is one of emphasis and degree. The goals are as follows: (1) understand more complex Latin syntax, (2) extend vocabulary skills, (3) expand ability to read and understand a complex passage, (4) expand ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin, (5) demonstrate an increased awareness of how Latin influenced English, (6) expand knowledge of the institutions of ancient Roman society, (7) expand knowledge of Roman cultural influences on present-day America, and (8) understand the historical background of the passages read. In Latin II the study of Latin grammar is completed and students move to the full-fledged reading of the ancient texts.

The traditional vocabulary and syntax review comes at the beginning of the year. Grammatical elements that were not covered in Latin I are addressed. For example, the subjunctive mood is usually taught in Latin II. If possible, Latin reading and grammatical elements are introduced concurrently and class time is divided between the two. This balance of reading and grammar offers a change of pace and variety of class activities. As the year moves on, grammatical exercises are emphasized less and less; grammar is addressed and examined as it exists in readings.

Latin II teachers can use many different readings depending on their text: for example, the tale of Ulysses in Hines (5), Hercules in Jenney (6), Jason and the Argonauts in Ullman (10), Roman Britain in the Cambridge Latin Series (2, 3), and Publius and Furianus also in Ullman (10). These readings accomplish the same goal, i.e., allowing students the opportunity to read some less difficult Latin that employs many of the grammatical rules that they have learned in Latin I. Any reading that accomplishes this goal can be used.

Hand in hand with the reading, the teacher should introduce supplementary material concerning history, archeology, or mythology. For instance, when reading the story of Ulysses the teacher might take the

opportunity to make some germane comments from Finley's *World of Odysseus* (4). None of the readings mentioned above should be taught in a vacuum, i.e., strictly for their value in learning the language. They are all relevant to many different disciplines, and can lead teachers into discussions of a wide range of topics, making the Latin class come alive for the students and adding a vibrant and dynamic dimension to the class. The Latin teacher needs to be creative and not be confined by the textbook. If a student has a genuine question about the treatment of women during the Age of Augustus, teachers should try to answer the question or encourage the student to explore this academic question on his or her own and report back to the class. Even the simplest reading can inspire discussion.

By the end of the year it is time to attack Caesar, which is the true baptism for the Latin II student. It is very difficult for some students to go from the comfort of simple memorization of grammatical forms and syntax to reading Latin texts. *Puella aquam portat* is a long way from *Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres*. At this point the Latin teacher must be flexible and realize that not every class is capable of the same type of work from year to year. In addition, Latin is not a required course in most high schools. If teachers are not aware of each group's differences and plan accordingly, they might not have a class the following year. If a class is a little slower than usual, take the time to work carefully with the students. If they are especially bright, push them. There is not necessarily a fixed amount of work that has to be covered by the end of the year. The goal should be to have students enjoy the Latin experience, not to create college Classics majors.

Another good tactic to create interest in the second half of Latin II is a library report on some historical aspect of the Roman Republic. This is a natural lead-in to Caesar's *Commentaries* and also breaks up the monotony of translation and recitation. Ancient historical figures almost always impress high school students. It is hard for them to believe that so much is written about Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, a man of whom they have never heard.

If all goes well, then, the goal that was established in Latin I will have been met in Latin II, i.e., students are reading Latin from the ancient text. Thus, Latin I and II are a unified whole (one course taught in two years), which results in the production of a Latin reader who has an

appreciation of more than just grammatical rules. If the Latin II year has been a successful one, a Latin III class is assured. The first half of the Latin curriculum is over. If students decide not to go on, they have at least a basic background in the study of Latin and its culture.

Teaching Latin III

In many ways, Latin III and Latin IV function as a unified whole, i.e., one course taught in two years. Although one cannot force students to take the fourth-year course, they can be told that taking Latin III without continuing in Latin IV is like eating a fine meal and skipping the dessert. For this author, Latin IV is the dessert of the Latin curriculum. The focus of these two courses is literary and historical rather than grammatical. Although grammar is still important and crucial to the understanding of Latin, grammar at these levels functions more as the means to literary and historical ends. In Latin III, the subject matter goals are as follows: (1) understand complex Latin syntax, (2) extend vocabulary skills, (3) expand ability to read and understand selected passages in Latin, (4) expand ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin, (5) become aware of Roman religion as represented in art and literature, (6) expand knowledge of Roman cultural influence on present-day America, (7) understand the historical and literary background of the passages read, and (8) demonstrate an increased awareness of how Latin has influenced English. Again the goals are similar to those already proposed for Latin I and Latin II, but this similarity of goals throughout the Latin program gives the curriculum a firm base from which new ideas can be developed. It is easier to explain what is to be accomplished to those who are not convinced of the worth of Latin or to students who want to know what they will achieve in their study of Latin. The rationale and structure are built into the subject-matter goals and instructional objectives. By being methodical and structured, Latin teachers communicate clearly the goals of their courses.

Sallust, Cicero, and Ovid are the major authors studied in Latin III. The first semester is devoted to the political makeup of the Roman Republic and the significance of Sallust's and Cicero's writings. Of course, the overriding goal is to introduce students to the reading and analysis of Latin texts. They not only learn to translate difficult material, but

they also practice critical analysis and interpretation of the text. For example, does Cicero really intend what he says? Why are some words emphasized? Why are some words left out? What is the overall effect of the passage? These are only a few of the questions that are asked when we read critically. Latin III begins to function as a class in the examination of the Roman mind. What was Cicero really thinking 2000 years ago when he wrote the *Catilinarian Orations*?

In the second semester the world of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Apuleius' *Golden Ass* (1), in translation, are explored. The students are eager to do some of Ovid's mythological tales and the reading of Apuleius' ribald tales is always a pleasure. A library project and term paper concerning mystery cults is assigned in connection with the reading of the *Golden Ass*. This ends the school year on an interesting note and keeps the Latin III students enthusiastic about returning for Latin IV.

Teaching Latin IV

The subject-matter goals for Latin IV are identical to those of Latin III. However, the instructional objectives do differ somewhat. (See the appendix for further information on these differences.) The fourth year of Latin should be a culmination of everything the students and teacher have worked for so diligently. The curriculum normally centers on Vergil's *Aeneid* and the Augustan Age. Latin IV students are expected to continue to use the critical thinking and inquiry skills that they learned in Latin III. It is not enough to be able to translate the *Aeneid* only. The students should understand how the *Aeneid* works and why Vergil wrote it.

Brooks Otis (7), Viktor Pörschal (8), and Michael Putnam (9) are only a few of the references available for the Latin teacher. The study of the *Aeneid* can spark political, religious, historical, literary, sociological, and psychological discussions. If students are encouraged to investigate the *Aeneid* on these different levels, they will begin to see that Latin does live on in its impact on Western civilization.

The class should be organized around the daily translation of the *Aeneid*, but this should be a springboard into other areas of discussion. The real quality of the *Aeneid* will then be understood by students: the

ability of literature to make people understand themselves and others like them. If students begin to acquire this insight, the class will be a success and students will experience a feeling of accomplishment.

Conclusion

The Latin curriculum outlined above presents a four-year sequence of courses with specific objectives and interrelated goals that change in emphasis as the student progresses through the program. The learning of Latin grammar and vocabulary is not seen as an end in and of itself but as preparation for reading ancient texts. In addition to the language and reading goals described, it should also be noted that the program widens the students' ability to think and gives them intimate contact with the ancient world. This program is a course of study in the Classics, and one that is deeply rooted in the Humanities. It is the cornerstone of a civilized education.

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Appendix

Latin I
Subject-Matter Goals and Instructional Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Understand Latin syntax
   - A. Distinguish between Latin and English morphology
   - B. Distinguish declarative, interrogative, and imperative statements
   - C. Determine the meaning of simple statements
   - D. Determine the meaning of increasingly longer passages
2. Develop vocabulary skills
   - A. Recognize the meanings of words from Latin to English and English to Latin
   - B. Recognize English derivatives
   - C. Recognize Latin root words
3. Develop ability to read and understand a simple Latin passage
   - A. Recognize the written symbols of previously learned words
   - B. Determine the meaning of a simple sentence using previously learned vocabulary and grammar in new combinations
4. Demonstrate an awareness of how Latin has influenced English
   - A. Recognize Latin syntax in common English usage
   - B. Recognize Latin root words in English derivatives
   - C. Recognize Latin prefixes and suffixes in English usage
5. Understand the institutions, culture, and religion of ancient Roman society
   - A. Explain and discuss family relationships
   - B. Explain and discuss daily activities
   - C. Explain and discuss foods
   - D. Explain and discuss holidays
   - E. Explain and discuss Roman art and architecture
   - F. Explain and discuss Roman mythology
6. Understand the Roman cultural influences on present-day America
   - A. Compare and contrast family relationships
   - B. Compare and contrast daily activities
   - C. Compare and contrast foods

D. Compare and contrast holidays
E. Compare and contrast artistic styles
F. Recognize Roman mythological elements in American culture

7. Develop ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin
   A. Repeat Latin phonemes
   B. Repeat Latin words with proper stress

Latin II
Subject-Matter Goals and Instructional Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Understand more complex syntax
   A. Recognize all the declensions and conjugations
   B. Determine the meaning of simple and complex sentences
   C. Recognize the person, number, tense, voice, and mood of Latin verbs
2. Extend vocabulary skills
   A. Recognize the meanings of words from Latin to English
   B. Recognize English derivatives
   C. Recognize Latin root words
3. Expand ability to read and understand a complex Latin passage
   A. Recognize the written symbols of previously learned words
   B. Determine the meaning of complex sentences using previously learned vocabulary and grammar in new combinations
4. Expand ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin
   A. Repeat Latin phonemes
   B. Repeat Latin words with proper stress
   C. Read aloud long prose passages
5. Demonstrate an increased awareness of how Latin influenced English
   A. Recognize Latin syntax in common English usage
   B. Recognize Latin root words in English derivatives
   C. Recognize Latin prefixes and suffixes in English usage
6. Expand knowledge of the institutions of ancient Roman society, culture, and religion
   A. Explain and discuss family relationships
   B. Explain and discuss daily activities
   C. Explain and discuss foods

D. Explain and discuss holidays
E. Explain and discuss Roman art and architecture
F. Explain and discuss Roman mythology

7. Expand knowledge of Roman cultural influences on present-day America
   A. Compare and contrast family relationships
   B. Compare and contrast daily activities
   C. Compare and contrast foods
   D. Compare and contrast holidays
   E. Compare and contrast artistic styles
   F. Recognize Roman mythological elements in American culture
8. Understand the historical background of the passages read
   A. Examine the Roman monarchy and the republic
   B. Examine the Gallic Wars according to Caesar

Latin III
Subject-Matter Goals and Instructional Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Understand complex Latin syntax
   A. Recognize stylistic differences of selected authors
   B. Determine the meaning of complex passages
   C. Recognize the syntax and morphology of Latin grammar
2. Extend vocabulary skills
   A. Recognize the meanings of words from Latin to English
   B. Recognize English derivatives
   C. Recognize Latin root words and their frequentatives
3. Expand ability to read and understand selected passages
   A. Determine the meaning of complex passages using previously learned vocabulary in new combinations
   B. Interpret selections from Golden Age literature
   C. Interpret selections from Silver Age literature
4. Expand ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin
   A. Read aloud a long prose passage with the proper intonation
   B. Read aloud epic poetry using the correct meter
   C. Read aloud Latin love elegy using the correct meter
5. Become aware of Roman religion as represented in art and literature

A. Recognize different aspects of Roman public and private religion
B. Identify the influence of the gods in both the Golden and Silver Ages of literature
C. Recognize the influence of Mystery Cults on Roman religion

6. Expand knowledge of Roman cultural influences on present-day America
   A. Explain the effect of political institutions
   B. Explain the effect of Mystery Cults on Christianity
   C. Explain the effects of Stoicism and Epicureanism
7. Understand the historical and literary background of passages read
   A. Explain the effect of the Republic on Roman history
   B. Explain the importance of Golden Age literature
8. Demonstrate an increased awareness of how Latin has influenced English
   A. Recognize Latinate styles of writing
   B. Recognize Latin root words in English derivatives
   C. Examine and react to a 20th century Latin periodical

Latin IV
Subject-Matter Goals and Instructional Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Understand complex Latin syntax
   A. Recognize stylistic differences of selected authors and works
   B. Determine the meaning of complex and detailed works
   C. Recognize the syntax and morphology of Latin grammar
2. Extend vocabulary skills
   A. Recognize the meanings of words from Latin to English
   B. Recognize English derivatives
   C. Recognize Latin root words and their frequentatives
3. Expand ability to read and understand selected works in Latin
   A. Determine the meaning of complex passages using previously learned vocabulary in new combinations
   B. Interpret works from Golden Age literature
   C. Interpret works from Silver Age literature
4. Expand ability to pronounce the sounds of classical Latin
   A. Read aloud a long prose passage with the proper intonation

B. Read aloud epic poetry using the correct meter
C. Read aloud Latin love elegy using the correct meter

5. Become aware of Roman government and politics as represented by Latin authors
   A. Recognize the influence of Roman oratory on Roman politics
   B. Recognize the importance of Roman political institutions
   C. Recognize the influence of the works of Cicero
6. Expand knowledge of Roman cultural influences on present-day America
   A. Explain the effect of the art of persuasion
   B. Explain how Christianity changed the Roman Empire
   C. Explain the philosophy of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius
7. Understand the historical and literary background of works read
   A. Explain the effect of the Empire on Roman history
   B. Explain the influence of Vergil's *Aeneid* on Latin literature
   C. Explain the importance of Silver Age literature
8. Demonstrate an increased awareness of how Latin has influenced English
   A. Recognize Latinate styles of writing
   B. Recognize Latin root words in English derivatives
   C. Examine and react to a 20th century Latin periodical